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The remarkable differences in the habits of gulls, which form in part the basis of separation, as suggested by Boie in the case of the blackheaded gulls, were early noticed. Old Gesner (1587) says that some gulls dwell about fresh waters, others about the sea; and from Aristotle, that the grey gull seeks lakes and rivers, whilst the white gull inhabits the sea. Every one indeed must have noticed the flocks of gulls which occasionally appear inland, and share with the rooks and other corvidæ the rich repast of grubs which is afforded by the fresh-ploughed land. The common gull (*Larus canus*) is one of those which indulge in these terrestrial excursions; but the blackheaded gulls (*Xema*) select even the inland marshes as their breeding-places. The more truly maritime gulls select islands or rocks, on the surface of which they deposit their eggs, as the kittiwake the narrow ledges of precipitous cliffs, the young being reared with safety, where it would seem that the least movement must plunge them from the giddy height into the abyss below. This beautiful illustration of the power of instinct to preserve even the nestling from danger, is admirably displayed on the northern coast of Mayo, where at Downpatrick Head the whole face of the perpendicular limestone cliff is peopled by line above line of gulls, flying, when disturbed by a stone thrown either from mischievous or curious hand, in screaming flocks from their eggs or young, and as quickly settling upon them again, without, as it were, disturbing the equilibrium of either in a place where to move would be to tumble into destruction. The clamour of the kittiwake is indeed so great on such occasions that it has given rise in the Feroe Islands to a proverb, "noisy as the Rita in the rocks." The eggs of several species of gulls are used as food, being regularly sought for as such on the coast of Devonshire and other maritime places, but those of the blackheaded gulls are considered the best, and often substituted for plover eggs. The flesh of gulls was considered by the ancients unfit for the food of man; not so by the moderns, who, though probably no great admirers of it, have not entirely rejected it. Hence Willoughby tells us (1678) that "the searows (blackheaded gulls) yearly build and breed at Norbury in Staffordshire, in an island in the middle of a great pool, in the grounds of Mr Skrimshaw, distant at least 30 miles from the sea. About the beginning of March hither they come; about the end of April they build. They lay three, four, or five eggs of a dirty green colour, spotted with dark brown, two inches long, of an ounce and half weight, blunter at one end. The first down of the young is ash-coloured, and spotted with black. The first feathers on the back, after they are fledged, are black. When the young are almost come to their full growth, those entrusted by the lord of the soil drive them from off the island through the pool, into nets set in the banks to take them. When they have taken them, they feed them with the entrails of beasts; and when they are fat, sell them for fourpence or fivepence a-piece. They take yearly about one thousand two hundred young ones; whence may be computed what profit the lord makes of them. About the end of July they all fly away and leave the island." And in Feroe, according to Landt (1798), the flesh of the kittiwake is not only eaten, but considered "well-tasted." As pets, gulls have always on the sea-coast been favourites, Gesner quotes from Oppian, "That gulls are much attached to man—familiarily attend upon him; and, when watching the fishermen, as they draw their nets and divide the spoil, clamorously demand their share." In our own boyish experience we knew one, poor Tom, which grew up under our care to maturity, and, unrestrained by any artificial means, flew away and returned again as inclination impelled it—recognising and answering our voice even when flying high in air above. But, alas! like too many pets, he fell a sacrifice to the loss of that instinct which would have led him to shun danger. He joined a crowd of water-fowl on a small lake on the Start Bay Sands. His companions, alarmed at the approach of the fowler, flew unharmed away; but poor Tom, with ill-judged confidence, left the water and walked fearlessly towards the enemy of all winged creatures, who could not allow even a gull to escape, and, alas! he was the next moment stretched lifeless on the sand. Here we shall arrest our pen. Perhaps we have dwelt too long on this interesting genus of birds, and yet we would hope that some of our readers may profit by our remarks, and be led to watch with an inquisitive eye the many animated beings which surround them, and thus to read in Nature's never-tiring, never-exhausted volume, new lessons of wisdom—new proofs of the exalted intelligence which has created every thing perfect and good of its kind. J. E. P.

## THE CHASE,

A POEM TRANSLATED FROM THE IRISH.

OISIN.

O son of Calphruin! thou whose ear  
Sweet chant of psalms delights to hear,  
Hast thou ere heard the tale,  
How Fionn urged the lonely chase,  
Apart from all the Fenian race,  
Brave sons of Innisfail?

PATRICK.

O royal born! whom none exceeds  
In moving song, or hardy deeds,  
That tale, to me as yet untold,  
Though far renown'd, do thou unfold  
In truth severely wise,  
From fancy's wanderings far apart:  
For what is fancy's glozing art  
But falsehood in disguise?

OISIN.

O! ne'er on gallant Fenian race  
Fell falsehood's accusation base:  
By faith of deeds, by strength of hand,  
By trusty might of battle-brand,  
We spread afar our glorious fame,  
And safely from each conflict came.  
Ne'er sat a monk in holy chair,  
Devote to chanting hymn and prayer,  
More true than the Fenians bold:  
No chief like Fionn, world around,  
Was e'er to bards so gen'rous found,  
With gifts of ruddy gold.  
If lived the son of Morné fleet,  
Who ne'er for treasure burned;  
Or Duiné's son to woman sweet,  
Who ne'er from battle turned,  
But fearless with his single glaive  
A hundred foemen dared to brave:  
If lived Macgarree stern and wild,  
That hero of the trenchant brand;  
Or Caoilte, Ronan's witty child,  
Of liberal heart and open hand;  
Or Oscar, once my darling boy,  
Thy psalms would bring me little joy.  
If lived, the Fenian deeds to sing,  
Sweet Fergus with his voice of glee;  
Or Daire, who trilled a faultless string,  
Small pleasure were thy bells to me.  
If lived the dauntless little Hugh,  
Or Fillan, courteous, kind and meek,  
Or Conan bald, for whom the dew  
Of sorrow yet is on my cheek,  
Or that small dwarf whose power could steep  
The Fenian host in death-like sleep—  
More sweet one breath of theirs would be  
Than all thy clerks' sad psalmody.

PATRICK.

Thy chiefs renowned extol no more,  
O son of kings—nor number o'er;  
But low, on bended knee, record  
The power and glory of the Lord;  
And beat the breast, and shed the tear,  
And still his holy name revere,  
Almighty, by whose potent breath  
Thy vanquished Fenians sleep in death.

OISIN.

Alas! for Oisín—dire the tale!  
No music in thy voice I hear;  
Not for thy wrathful God I wail,  
But for my Fenians dear.  
Thy God! a rueful God I trow,  
Whose love is earned by want and woe!  
Since came thy dull psalm-singing crew,  
How rapid away our pastimes flew,  
And all that charmed the soul!  
Where now are the royal gifts of gold,  
The flowing robe with its satin fold,  
And the heart-delighting bowl?  
Where now the feast, and the revel high,  
And the jocund dance and sweet minstrelsy,  
And the steed loud-neighing in the morn,  
With the music sweet of hound and horn,

And well-armed guards of coast and bay ?  
 All, all like a dream have passed away ;  
 And now we have clerks with their holy qualms,  
 And books, and bells, and eternal psalms,  
 And fasting—that waster gaunt and grim,  
 That strips of all beauty both body and limb.

PATRICK.

Oh! cease this strain, nor longer dare  
 Thy Fionn, or his chiefs, compare  
 With him who reigns in matchless might,  
 The King of kings enthroned in light.  
 'Tis he who frames the heavens and earth ;  
 'Tis he who nerves the hero's hand ;  
 'Tis he who calls fair fields to birth,  
 And bids each blooming branch expand :  
 He gives the fishy streams to run,  
 And lights the moon and radiant sun.  
 What deeds like these, though great his fame,  
 Canst thou ascribe to Fionn's name ?

OISIN.

To weeds and grass his princely eye  
 My sire ne'er fondly turned ;  
 But he raised his country's glory high,  
 When the strife of warriors burned.  
 To shine in games of strength and skill,  
 To breast the torrent from the hill,  
 To lead the van of the bannered host—  
 These were his deeds and these his boast.  
 Where was thy God, when o'er the tide  
 Two heroes hither bore  
 Of Lochlin, king of ships, the bride,  
 And carnage heaped the shore ?  
 When Taillc on Fenians hacked his brand,  
 'Twas not thy God's, but Oscar's hand  
 That hero prostrate laid ;  
 When rough-voiced Manus swept the coast,  
 If lived thy God, the Fenian host  
 Had triumphed by his aid.  
 When Aluin, Anver's son of fame,  
 Round Tara rolled the bickering flame,  
 Not by thy King's, but Oscar's glaive  
 The warrior sank in a bloody grave.  
 When haughty Dearg advanced in pride  
 With his shields of gold o'er Lochlin's tide,  
 Why lingered then thy cloud-borne Lord  
 To save our host from his slaughtering sword ?  
 Oh! glorious deeds arise in crowds,  
 Of the gallant Fenian band ;  
 But what is achieved by thy King of the clouds—  
 Where reddened he his hand ?\*

PATRICK.

Here let this vain contention rest,  
 For frenzy, Bard, inspires thy breast.  
 Supreme in bliss God ever reigns :  
 Thy Fionn groans in hell's domains—  
 In penal fire—in lasting chains.

OISIN.

Small glory to thy potent King  
 His chains and fires on our host to bring !  
 Oh! how unlike our generous chief,  
 Who, if thy King felt wrong or grief,  
 Would soon in arms, with valour strong,  
 Avenge the grief, redress the wrong.  
 Whom did the Fenian king e'er see  
 In thralldom, pain, or fear,  
 But his ready gold would set him free,  
 Or the might of his victor spear ?  
 This arm, did frenzy touch my brain,  
 Their heads from thy clerks would sever,  
 Nor thy crozier here, nor white book remain,  
 Nor thy bells be heard for ever.

TO BE CONTINUED.

\* ————— *rubente*  
*Dextera sacras jaculatus arces*  
*Terruit urbem.*—Hos.

————— Heaven's eternal Sire,  
 With *red right-arm*, at his own temples hurl'd  
 His thunders, and alarm'd a guilty world.—FRANCIS.

Some of Oisín's expressions might justly shock the piety of St Patrick. But let it be remembered that Oisín is no convert to Christianity ; on the contrary, he is opposed to it, principally because it had put an end to his favourite pastimes.

## EGYPT AND SYRIA—MEHEMET ALI.

THE boasted civilization which Mehemet Ali has introduced into the countries under his sway is entirely superficial, and has no origin whatever in any real improvement or amelioration in the condition or for the benefit of their respective populations ; and the reason why a contrary impression has so generally prevailed amongst late travellers is as follows :—When travellers arrive at Alexandria, and more particularly those of name or rank, they immediately fall into the hands of a set of clever persons, some of them consuls, who having either made their fortunes by the Pacha, or having them to make, leave no effort unemployed to impress them with favourable opinions of his government. They are then presented at the Divan, where, instead of a reserved austere-looking Turk, they find a lively animated old man, who converses freely and gaily with them, talks openly of his projects to come, and of his past life, tells them that he is glad to see them, and that the more travellers that pass through Egypt, the better he is pleased ; that he wishes every act of his government and institutions to be known and seen, and that the more they are so, the better will he be appreciated. He then turns the conversation to some subject personal to them, for he is always well informed of who and what they are, and what they know, and at last dismisses them with an injunction to visit his establishments with care, and to let him know their opinion of them on their return ; and if they happen to be persons of distinction, he offers them a cavass to accompany them on their journey. AH this is done in a simple pleasing manner, which can hardly fail to captivate when coming from so remarkable a man. Instructed by the clique, and won by the Pacha, they proceed on their journey to Cairo, where the delusion begun at Alexandria is completed ; for travelling through the country is now easy, and comparatively safe to what it was, and establishments of various kinds, such as polytechnic schools, schools of medicine and general instruction, and manufactories, have been formed in Cairo and those parts of the country which are most frequently visited. These are under the direction of foreigners, chiefly Frenchmen, and are open to those who choose to visit them ; consequently, as the greater proportion of travellers seek for sights more than instruction, these gentlemen, won at Alexandria, and delighted at the facility of their journey from that place, neither turn to the right nor the left from the beaten track, but, judging of what they do not see by that which is purposely prepared to be shown them, return to Europe, and on grounds such as I have above described, and without looking an inch beneath the surface, proclaim the Pacha the civilizer and regenerator of Egypt. How far such is the case, you will be able to judge from what follows, in which there is no exaggeration. The journey I made extended up to the second cataract on the Nile, throughout Egypt and Nubia, and then through Palestine, the whole of Syria, and the Libanus. I consequently visited very nearly all the countries under the domination of Mehemet Ali, and as I did not allow myself to be influenced at Alexandria, and missed no occasion of informing myself of the state of things whilst on my journey, I may fairly say that I can give an unbiassed opinion as to what is going on in that unhappy part of the world.

In Egypt the whole of the land belongs to the Pacha ; besides himself there is no land-proprietor, and he has the absolute monopoly of every thing that is grown in the country. The following is the manner in which it is cultivated :—Portions of land are divided out between the fellahs of a village, according to their numbers ; seed, corn, cotton, or other produce, is given to them ; this they sow and reap, and of the produce seventy-five per cent. is immediately taken to the Pacha's depots. The remaining twenty-five per cent. is left them, with, however, the power to take it at a price fixed by the Pacha himself, and then resold to them at a higher rate. This is generally done, and reduces the pittance left them about five per cent. more ; from this they are to pay the capitation tax, which is not levied according to the real number of the inhabitants of a village, but according to numbers at which it is rated in the government books ; so that in one instance with which I was acquainted, a village originally rated at 200, but reduced by the conscription to 100, and by death or flight to 40, was still obliged to pay the full capitation ; and when I went there, 26 of the 40 had been just bastinadoed to extort from them their proportion of the sum claimed. After the capitation comes the tax on the date-trees, raised